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EXAMINER

SHAIFER HARRIMAN, DANT B

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

2434

NOTIFICATION DATE

DELIVERY MODE

10/22/2008

ELECTRONIC

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Notice of the Office communication was sent electronically on above-indicated "Notification Date" to the following e-mail address(es):

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DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

Status of the instant application:

- Claims 1 - 40 are pending in the instant application.
- Claims 1 – 11 & 13 – 16 & 18 – 24 & 26 – 29 & 31- 40 are amended in the instant application.
- Claims 12, 17, 25, 30 are original in the instant application.
- Referring to claim 2 under a claim objection for the mis-spelling of the word with, applicant amendment to the claim limitation has been fully considered and is persuasive; the rejection is withdrawn, based on applicant's amendment to claim 2.
- Applicants request for examiner to submit the cited references of record in the 892 in the next office action is noted.
- Applicants request for examiner to consider applicants 1449 forms in the next subsequent office is noted. The examiner notes that all prior art cited by applicant in the June 21, 2004 IDS submission has been considered.
- Referring to claims 1 – 20 & 35 – 37 under 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection for non – statutory subject matter of software per se, applicants arguments and or amendments and or remarks have been fully considered and are found to be persuasive, the rejection is withdrawn based on applicants amendments to claims 1 – 20 of the word processor.
- Referring to claims 22 – 33 under 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection for non – statutory subject matter of software per se., is still maintained.

Response to Arguments

- Applicants arguments and or remarks filed 07/25/2008 have been fully considered and are not persuasive, please see the office action below for details.

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Examiner response to applicant's arguments:

Applicant states: "Applicant submits that Osawa is silent regarding a range of maintenance that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make (or an extent of the maintenance to which the maintenance- person is permitted to make) with respect to an electronic apparatus. "

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant's logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: "Applicant respectfully submits that Osawa does not disclose or suggest a setting part that is set with a maintenance range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 1. "

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant's logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057 of Osawa, the examiner notes that the control range is set based on control values.

Applicant states: "Accordingly, Applicant submits that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a setting part that is set with a maintenance range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted."

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant's logic and reasoning, the examiner points to the examiner logic and reasoning above.

Applicant states: "Applicant submits that Miyajima does not disclose or suggest a changing part configured to temporarily change *a maintenance range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted*, as recited in amended Claim 1. "

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted,(i.e. temporary

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change of maintenance range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: “Accordingly, Applicant submits that Osawa and Miyaiima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a changing part configured to temporarily change a maintenance range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 1.”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant’s logic and reasoning, the examiner points to the examiner logic and reasoning above under paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima.

Applicant states: “It is submitted that Osawa is silent about a range of maintenance that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus. ”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “Applicant submits that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest an input part configured to permit input of a change instruction for changing a maintenance range, *the **maintenance** range being a range **in which maintenance of an** electronic equipment by **a** maintenance-attending person is permitted*, as recited in amended Claim 7. ”

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- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 of Miyajima, the examiner notes specifically in paragraph: 0138, the operator can input a operator code in the diagnostic machine in order to be authenticated to have access to the diagnostic equipment.

Applicant states: “As discussed previously, Osawa is devoid of a reference regarding a range of maintenance that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus.”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “It is respectfully submitted that Osawa and Mivaiima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest a setting part configured to set in advance a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 9.”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant’s logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057 of Osawa, the examiner notes that the control range is set based on control values.

Applicant states: “Further to the above remarks, Osawa fails to describe a range of maintenance that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus.”

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- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “Applicant respectfully submits that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest setting in advance a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 22. ”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. advance maintenance setting range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: “Moreover, Applicant submits that Osawa does not disclose or suggest a maintenance range that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus. ”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “It is respectfully submitted that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest setting means for storing a maintenance range in

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which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 35.”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges (i.e. storing of maintenance ranges), that allows for a serviceman to maintained a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “Further to the above remarks, it is submitted that Osawa fails to disclose or suggest a maintenance range that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus.”

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintaine a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “It is respectfully submitted that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest input means for permitting input of a change instruction for temporarily changing a maintenance range, the maintenance range being a range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 36. ”

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- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicant's logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraph: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: "As previously discussed, Osawa is silent with regard to a permitted range of maintenance of a maintenance-attending person relative to an electronic apparatus. "

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: "It is respectfully submitted that Osawa and Migaiima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest setting means for setting in advance a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 37."

- The examiner respectfully disagrees with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. advance maintenance setting range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: "Further, Osawa is devoid of a reference to a permitted range of maintenance of an electronic apparatus for a maintenance-attending person. "

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would

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control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “It is submitted that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest setting a maintenance range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 38. ”

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted,(i.e. temporary change of maintenance range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: “As previously remarked, Osawa does not disclose or suggest a permitted range of maintenance for a maintenance-attending person relative to an electronic apparatus.”

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “Applicant respectfully submits that Osawa and Miyajima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest inputting a change instruction for temporarily changing a maintenance range when an authenticating authenticates a validity of an operator, the maintenance range being a range in which maintenance of an electronic equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 39.”

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a

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machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted,(i.e. temporary change of maintenance range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Applicant states: “As previously discussed, Osawa is absent a reference to maintenance range that a maintenance-attending person is permitted to make to an electronic apparatus.”

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device, and obviously the maintenance of the device, and applicant even agrees with examiner in the remarks section of filed amendment, please see page 17, lines 13 – 15, the examiner notes that administrative setting ranges, that allows for a serviceman to maintain a device or apparatus in any respect, will obviously be able to service other areas of the device.

Applicant states: “It is respectfully submitted that Osawa and Miyaiima, taken alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest setting in advance a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted, as recited in amended Claim 40.”

- The examiner respectfully disagree with applicants logic and reasoning, the examiner points to paragraphs: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. advance maintenance setting range) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101

35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

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Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Claim(s) 22 – 33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. The claims lack the necessary physical articles or objects to constitute a machine or a manufacture within the meaning of 35 USC 101. They are clearly not a series of steps or acts to be a process nor are they a combination of chemical compounds to be a composition of matter. As such, they fail to fall within a statutory category. They are, at best, functional descriptive material *per se*. The examiner notes the claims above are merely software *per se*, which is clearly not a statutory subject matter.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim(s) 1 – 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over OSAWA (10 – 305528) in view of Miyajima (2001 - 075095).

OSAWA discloses:

1. An electronic equipment having parts that may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

- a setting part that is set with a the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance – attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057, also please see paragraphs: 0039 & 0043 of Osawa, the examiner notes that Osawa teaches a range of control values (i.e. maintenance range) that would control the operation of the device);

2. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said

- setting part is preset with a maintenance range for each maintenance person (Paragraph: 0045).

9. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

- a setting part configured to set in advance the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a

maintenance – attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

22. An equipment maintenance method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising the steps of:

(a) setting in advance a maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

35. An electronic equipment having parts which may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

- setting means set with a predetermined maintenance range in which the maintenance is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

37. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

- setting means for setting in advance a maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

38. A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing a computer to set a maintenance range which specifies parts of an electronic equipment which may be subjected to maintenance, said program comprising:

- a setting procedure causing the computer to be set with a predetermined maintenance range in which the maintenance is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

40. A computer-readable storage medium which stores a program for causing a computer to control a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, said program comprising:

- a setting procedure causing the computer to set in advance a maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment is permitted (Paragraph: 0016, 0028, 0029, 0045, 0047, 0052, 0057);

OSAWA does not explicitly disclose:

1. An electronic equipment having parts which may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

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- a processor configured to authenticate validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and
 - a changing part configured to temporarily change the maintenance range set in said setting part, in response to a change instruction, when said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.
3. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said
- processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the maintenance-attending person.
4. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said
- changing part adds a maintenance range specified by the change instruction only for a period of time specified by the change instruction, with respect to the maintenance range set in said setting part.
5. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said
- setting part is also set with a predetermined management range in which management is permitted, and said changing part also temporarily changes the predetermined management range set in said setting part, in response to the change instruction, when said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.
6. The electronic equipment as claim 1, further comprising:

- an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction by an operator whose validity is authenticated.

7. An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment that includes a setting part which is set with a maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, a first authenticating part to authenticate validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part to temporarily change the maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

- a processor configured to authenticate validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus;
- an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction for changing the maintenance range when the processor authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance – attending person is permitted; and
- a part configured to supply the change instruction input from said input part to the electronic equipment.

8. The equipment managing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein

- said processor authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator.

9. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

- a processor configured to authenticate validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and
- a changing part configured to temporarily change the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said processor, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range.

10. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said

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- setting part is provided within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment.

11. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said changing part is provided within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment.

12. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein

- said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

13. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein

- said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, or provided within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

14. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

- a second authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of an operator of said changing part.

15. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 14, wherein

- said second authenticating part authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator.

16. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of a maintenance person.

17. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said setting part sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

18. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

- a maintenance part configured to perform the maintenance of the equipment within the changed maintenance range.

19. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

- said maintenance part is provided in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment.

20. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

- said maintenance part is provided within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

21. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

22. An equipment maintenance method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

(a) setting in advance a maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;

(b) authenticating validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and

(c) changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said step (b), so that the

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maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range.

23. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(a) is performed within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment.

24. The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(c) is carried out within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment.

25. The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step

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(c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

26. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step

(c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a, network.

27. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising:

(d) authenticating validity of an operator of said changing part.

28. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 27, wherein said step

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(d) authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator.

29. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(b) authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of a maintenance person.

30. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(a) sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person.

31. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising:

(e) carrying out maintenance of the equipment within the changed maintenance range.

32. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said step

(e) is carried out in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment.

33. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said step

(e) is carried out within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network.

34. The equipment maintenance method as Claimed in claim 22, wherein

- the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a

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medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment.

35. An electronic equipment having parts which may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

- setting means for storing the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance attending person is permitted;
- authenticating means for authenticating validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and
- changing means for temporarily changing the maintenance range stored in said setting means, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

36. An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment which includes setting means for storing a maintenance range in which maintenance-is permitted, first authenticating

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means for authenticating validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and changing means for temporarily changing the maintenance range stored in the setting means in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

- second authenticating means for authenticating validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus;
- input means for permitting input of the change instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the second authenticating means authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electric equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and
- means for supplying the change instruction input from said input means to the electronic equipment.

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37. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

- setting means for setting in advance the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;
- authenticating means for authenticating validity of a maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and
- changing means for temporarily changing the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating means, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range.

38. A computer-readable storage medium including a program wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for setting a maintenance range that specifies parts of an electronic equipment that may be subjected to maintenance, said method comprising:

- setting the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance – attending person is permitted;

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- authenticating a validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment; and
- changing temporarily the maintenance range set in said setting, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person.

39. A computer-readable storage medium including a program, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for managing an electronic equipment that includes a setting part set with a maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, an authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part configured to temporarily change the maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said method comprising:

- authenticating a validity of an operator of the computer;
- inputting the change instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the authenticating part authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance

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range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted; and

- supplying the change instruction input by said inputting to the electronic equipment.

40. A computer-readable storage medium including a program wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, said method comprising:

- setting in advance the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted;
- authenticating a validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment; and
- changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range.

However, Miyajima discloses:

1. An electronic equipment having parts which may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

- a processor configured to authenticate validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138, the examiner notes specifically in paragraph: 0138, the device to be serviced is a diagnostic machine, to one of ordinary skill in the art, any machine to function must have a processor to operate); and
- a changing part configured to temporarily change the maintenance range set in said setting part, in response to a change instruction, when said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person (Paragraphs: 0018, 0081).

3. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said

- processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the maintenance-attending person (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 & 0047, 0127, 0128).

4. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said

- changing part adds a maintenance range specified by the change instruction only for a period of time specified by the

change instruction, with respect to the maintenance range set in said setting part (Paragraphs: 0047, 0127, 0128).

5. The electronic equipment as claimed in claim 1, wherein said

- setting part is also set with a predetermined management range in which management is permitted, and said changing part also temporarily changes the predetermined management range set in said setting part, in response to the change instruction, when said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person (Paragraphs: 0132, 0133, 0042, 0021, also the examiner notes specifically in paragraph: 0138, the device to be serviced is a diagnostic machine, to one of ordinary skill in the art, any machine to function must have a processor to operate).

6. The electronic equipment as claim 1, further comprising:

- an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction by an operator whose validity is authenticated (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138).

7. An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment that includes a setting part which is set with a maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, a first authenticating part to authenticate validity of a maintenance-attending person for the

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electronic equipment, and a changing part to temporarily change the maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

- a processor configured to authenticate validity of an operator of the equipment managing apparatus (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138, also the examiner notes specifically in paragraph: 0138, the device to be serviced is a diagnostic machine, to one of ordinary skill in the art, any machine to function must have a processor to operate);
- an input part configured to permit input of the change instruction for changing the maintenance range when the processor authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance – attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138, also see paragraph: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member); and

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- a part configured to supply the change instruction input from said input part to the electronic equipment (Paragraph: 0014).

8. The equipment managing apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein

- said processor authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 & 0047, 0127, 0128, the examiner interprets medium as a database that is in a server or computer).

9. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

- a processor configured to authenticate validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138); and
- a changing part configured to temporarily change the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said processor, so that

the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range (Paragraphs: 0018, 0081, also the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member).

10. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein said

- setting part is provided within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011, 0007).

11. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said changing part is provided within a maintenance service provider which provides maintenance services for the equipment or, within a setup site of the equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011, 0007).

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12. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein

- said changing part is provided within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

13. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 11, wherein

- said changing part is provided in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, or provided within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

14. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

- a second authenticating part configured to authenticate a validity of an operator of said changing part (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138).

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15. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 14, wherein

- said second authenticating part authenticates the validity of the operator using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator (Paragraphs: 0067, 0068, 0078, 0084).

16. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said processor authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of a maintenance person (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 & 0067, 0068, 0078, 0084 & 0047, 0127, 0128).

17. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- said setting part sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person (Paragraph: 0021, 0023, 0041, 0042).

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18. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, further comprising:

- a maintenance part configured to perform the maintenance of the equipment within the changed maintenance range (Paragraph: 0021, 0023, 0041, 0042).

19. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

- said maintenance part is provided in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

20. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 18, wherein

- said maintenance part is provided within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

21. The equipment maintenance system as claimed in claim 9, wherein

- the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011).

22. An equipment maintenance method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising the steps of:

(b) authenticating validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138); and

changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said step (b), so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range (Paragraphs: 0018, 0081, also the examiner specifically points to paragraph:

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0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day, (i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member).

23. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(a) is performed within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011, 0007).

24. The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(c) is carried out within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, or within a setup site of the equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011, 0007).

25. The equipment managing method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step

(c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

26. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 24, wherein said step

(c) is carried out in an apparatus within the maintenance service provider, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a, network (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

27. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising the steps of:

(d) authenticating validity of an operator of said changing part (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138).

28. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 27, wherein said step

(d) authenticates the validity of the operator, using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of the operator (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 & 0067, 0068, 0078, 0084 & 0047, 0127, 0128, the examiner interprets medium as a database that is integrated into a server).

29. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(b) authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person using an authenticating medium that stores authentication information of a maintenance person (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138 & 0067, 0068, 0078, 0084 & 0047, 0127, 0128, the examiner interprets medium as a database that is integrated into a server).

30. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, wherein said step

(a) sets in advance a maintenance range for each maintenance person (Paragraph: 0021, 0023, 0041, 0042).

31. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 22, further comprising the steps of:

(e) carrying out maintenance of the equipment within the changed maintenance range (Paragraph: 0021, 0023, 0041, 0042, also the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day, (i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member).

32. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said step

(e) is carried out in an apparatus within a maintenance service provider that provides maintenance services for the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network to perform remote maintenance of the equipment (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

33. The equipment maintenance method as claimed in claim 31, wherein said step

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(e) is carried out within an apparatus in a setup site of the equipment, or within the equipment, and said apparatus is communicatable with the equipment via a network (Paragraph: 0014 & 0012).

34. The equipment maintenance method as Claimed in claim 22, wherein

- the equipment is selected from a group consisting of an information processing apparatus, an office automation (OA) equipment, a point-of sales (POS) terminal equipment, a medical equipment, a vending machine, an electrical home appliance, and a portable terminal equipment (Paragraph: 0010, 0011).

35. An electronic equipment having parts which may be subjected to maintenance and are specified by a maintenance range, comprising:

- setting means for storing the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138); and

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- authenticating means for authenticating validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment(paragraph: 0138); and
- changing means for temporarily changing the maintenance range stored in said setting means, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person (Paragraphs: 0018, 0081).

36. An equipment managing apparatus for controlling an electronic equipment which includes setting means for storing a maintenance range in which maintenance-is permitted, first authenticating means for authenticating validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and changing means for temporarily changing the maintenance range stored in the setting means in response to a change instruction when the first authenticating means authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said equipment managing apparatus comprising:

- second authenticating means for authenticating validity of an operator of the equipment managing

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apparatus (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138);

- input means for permitting input of the change instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the second authenticating means authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electric equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0014, also see paragraph: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.); and
- means for supplying the change instruction input from said input means to the electronic equipment (Paragraph: 0014).

37. An equipment maintenance system for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, comprising:

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- setting means for setting in advance the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138); and
- authenticating means for authenticating validity of a maintenance-attending person for the equipment(paragraph: 0138); and
- changing means for temporarily changing the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating means, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range (Paragraphs: 0018, 0081).

38. A computer-readable storage medium including a program wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for setting a maintenance range that specifies parts of an electronic equipment that may be subjected to maintenance, said method comprising:

- setting the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by a maintenance – attending person is permitted (Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138);

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- authenticating a validity of the maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment(paragraph: 0138); and
- changing temporarily the maintenance range set in said setting, in response to a change instruction, when said authenticating authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person(Paragraphs: 0018, 0081, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member).

39. A computer-readable storage medium including a program, wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for managing an electronic equipment that includes a setting part set with a maintenance range in which maintenance is permitted, an authenticating part configured authenticate a validity of a maintenance-attending person for the electronic equipment, and a changing part configured to temporarily change the maintenance range set in the setting part in response to a change instruction when the authenticating part authenticates the validity of the maintenance-attending person, said method comprising:

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- authenticating a validity of an operator of the computer(Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138);
- inputting the change instruction for temporarily changing the maintenance range when the authenticating authenticates the validity of the operator, the maintenance range being a range in which the maintenance of the electronic equipment by the maintenance-attending person is permitted(Paragraph: 0018, also see paragraph: 0018 & 0081 of Miyajima, the examiner specifically points to paragraph: 0081, the service member that is to service a machine, can have his or her access authority time restricted on a particular day,(i.e. input of change instruction temporarily changing a maintenance range to service a machine) for a schedule maintenance by the service member.); and
- supplying the change instruction input by said inputting to the electronic equipment(Paragraph: 0018).

40. A computer-readable storage medium including a program wherein the program, when executed by a computer, causes the computer to perform a method for controlling a maintenance range in which maintenance of an equipment may be performed, said method comprising:

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- setting in advance the maintenance range in which the maintenance of the equipment by a maintenance-attending person is permitted(Paragraph: 0018, 0020, 0030, 0031, 0037, 0041, 0072, 0073, 0129, 0138);
- authenticating a validity of the maintenance-attending person for the equipment(paragraph: 0138); and
- changing temporarily the set maintenance range to a changed maintenance range based on an authentication result of said authenticating, so that the maintenance of the equipment is temporarily permitted within the changed maintenance range(Paragraphs: 0018, 0081).

OSAWA and Miyajima are analogous art because they are from the “same field of endeavor,” which is the field of remote secure repair maintenance of an electronic device.

At the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of OSAWA and Miyajima before him or her, to modify the repair of a electronic device by remote secure servicing utility by a repair person of OSAWA to include the repair of a electronic device by remote

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secure servicing utility by a authenticated repair person of Miyajima.

The suggestion/motivation for doing so would have been to allow for a authenticated user or operator to have restricted access to the servicing of a electronic device over the network, Paragraph: 0007 of Miyajima.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to DANT B. SHAFER HARRIMAN whose telephone number is (571)272-7910. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday: 8:00am - 5:30pm Alt.Fridays off.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kambiz Zand can be reached on (571) 272-3811. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Dant B Shaifer - Harriman /
Examiner, Art Unit 2434

10/07/2008
/Kambiz Zand/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2434